

Why are they doing this!



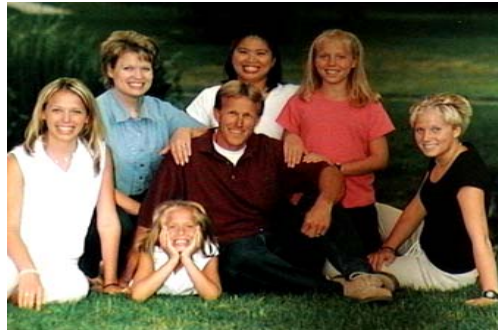
Holidays mean family and for children who are not with their family, a time for remembering those they've said goodbye to.



Your child's family is excited about the holidays and may try to "make up" for their child being in foster care.



All families have good times. They can't explain it, but somewhere the memories remain.



Traditionally the holidays consist of presents and parties, decorations and dinners, but in foster care, they are also times of anger and annoyance as well as temper and trauma.

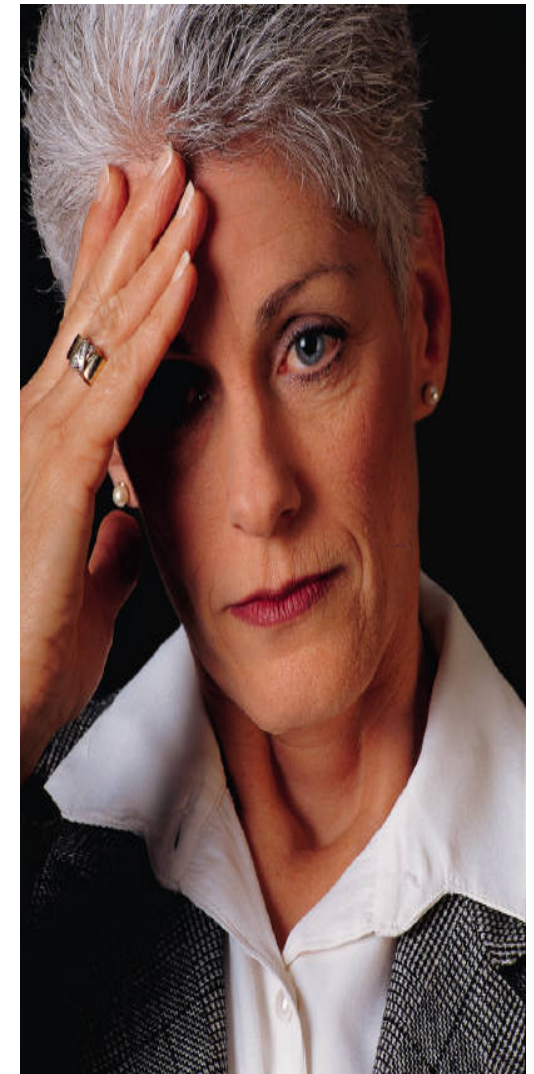
Keeping a cool head and a warm heart will enable your family, including your foster child, to survive the holidays!



OSMFMLY

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THE HOLIDAYS IN FOSTER CARE



What behaviors might you see during this time?



- *Frequent pouting*
- *Aggression—including hitting, biting, or kicking*
- *Whining*
- *Inconsolable crying*



- *Nightmares*
- *Suicidal ideations*
- *Old fears become new again*
- *Increase of temper outbursts*



What can you do?



1. *Meet together with your child's family to plan holiday schedules. Be sure to include any school productions your child might be involved in! If one particular date or event is special to you, speak up now. When you ask for a certain date, offer something in return. Compromise!*

2. *Ask your foster child or his parents about their family traditions and try to incorporate some into your home.*

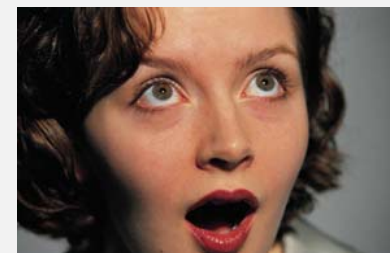
3. *Exchange family recipes with your child's family at Thanksgiving time.*

4. *Coordinate gift giving! Work together to determine gifts to be purchased by your family and gifts to be purchased by the family of origin.*

5. *Share the load. You don't have to impress anyone!*



What about me?



Talk to other foster parents who can give you a boost. They share your pain!

Call your consultant. He/She will help in any way possible.

Accept the fact that you won't please everyone. With so many people in your life, there is no way around it.



Set the example of calm. Keep the children on daily routines. This will lessen their stress, which also lessens yours!

Be flexible. Your level of calm becomes stressed when plans get canceled or changed. Be prepared with alternate plans.